Point Lookout Lighthouse (SM-271), Point Lookout Light Station

Narrative Summary: The Point Lookout Lighthouse is the principal building at the Point Lookout Light Station. Located at the tip of Southern Maryland in St. Mary's County, the light station served as an aid to navigation on the Chesapeake Bay at the mouth of the Potomac River from 1830 to 1965. Originally built as a combined dwelling and signal light in 1830, the lighthouse was extensively altered in 1883, and again between 1927 and 1928. Currently, the lighthouse is a two-story, four-bay, triple-pile duplex, with a raised basement and full-width front and rear porches. The brick-and-frame walls are covered with stucco. The two-stage octagonal tower projects through the hip roof on the front (east) of the building. Each duplex apartment has an entrance to the drum, which contains a winder stair and ladder that lead to the wrought-iron lantern. The fourth-order Fresnel lens was removed from the tower after the light was deactivated in 1965. Point Lookout Light Station also includes a buoy shed, coal shed, smokehouse, and the remains of the wharf.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey	No.	SM-271

Magi No.

DOE __yes __no

1. Nam	e (indicate pr	referred name)		
historic Poi	nt Lookout Liahthou	se (Point Lookout Li	aht Station)	
and/or common				
2. Loca	ation			
street & number	South terminus	of Marvland State Ro	ute 5	not for publication
city, town So	cotland	vicinity of	congressional district	5
state Marv	land	county	St. Marv's	
3. Clas	sification			
Category district building(s) structure site object	Ownership _X_ public private both Public Acquisition in process being considered not_applicable	Status occupiedX unoccupied work in progress AccessibleX yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	Present Use agriculture commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum park private residence religious scientific transportation other:
4. Own	er of Prope	rty (give names ar	nd mailing address	es of <u>all</u> owners)
name Patux	kent River Naval Ai	r Station (United St	ates Navv)	
street & number			telephone r	no.: (301) 342-3000
city, town Pa	atuxent River	state	and zip code Mar	rvland 20670
5. Loca	ation of Leg	al Description	on	
courthouse, regi		ice of Lands and Lic	enses	liber
street & number	1 Courthouse Dr	ive		folio
	ecnardtown		state	Marvland
6. Rep	resentation	in Existing	Historical Sur	veys
title None				
date			federal sta	ite county local
⊿pository for su	urvey records			
city, town			state	

7. Des	cription		Survey No. SM-271
Condition excellentx good fair	deteriorated ruins unexposed	Check one unaltered _X_ altered	Check one _X_ original site moved date of move

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

See continuation sheet 7.1.

8. Sign	ificance		Survey No.	SM-271
Period Areas of Significance—C prehistoric archeology-prehistoric 1400–1499 archeology-historic 1500–1599 agriculture 1600–1699 architecture 1700–1799 art X 1800–1899 commerce X 1900– communications		community planning conservation economics education engineering exploration/settleme industry	law literature military music	science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater
Specific dates	1830. 1883. 1927-1928	Builder/Architect Jo	hn Donohoo	
ar App1:	icable Criteria: X A nd/or icable Exception:A L of Significance:	BCD		
	a summary paragraph o			ent of history and

See continuation sheet 8.1.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. SM-271

See continuation sheet 9.1.

10.	Geog	grap	hical	Data				
•	gle name	Point	Lookout	oximatelv . Marvlan UTM refe	d		Quadran	gle scale <u>1:24.000</u>
A Zone	Easting	لب	Northing		BZoi	ne East	ing	Northing
C		 			D			
corres	sponds t	o the b	ounds of	the Navv	property at	the so	uth∈rn ti	the liahthouse roughl o of Point Lookout. of the liaht station.
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state state	-			code	county			code
11.	Form	ı Pro	pare	d By				
name/title	Steve	n H. M	offson. A	rchitectu	ıral Historia	h		
organizati	ion Dam	es & M	oore			date	Auaust	25. 1995
street & n	umber	7101	Wisconsin	Avenue.	Suite 700	telepho	ne (301) 652-2215
city or tov	wn Be	thesda			_	state	Marvlan	d

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to:

Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolie, Maryland 21401

(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DHCP/DHCD
160 COMMUNITY PLACE
CROT/AISVILLE, MD 21032-2023

-5117000

Description Summary: The Point Lookout Lighthouse is the principal building at the Point Lookout Light Station. Located at the tip of Southern Maryland in St. Mary's County, the light station served as an aid to navigation on the Chesapeake Bay at the mouth of the Potomac River from 1830 to 1965. Originally built as a combined dwelling and signal light in 1830, the lighthouse was extensively altered in 1883, and again between 1927 and 1928. Currently, the lighthouse is a two-story, four-bay, triple-pile duplex, with a raised basement and full-width front and rear porches. The brick-and-frame walls are covered with stucco. The two-stage octagonal tower projects through the hip roof on the front (east) of the building. Each duplex apartment has an entrance to the drum, which contains a winder stair and ladder that lead to the wrought-iron lantern. The fourth-order Fresnel lens was removed from the tower after the light was deactivated in 1965. Point Lookout Light Station also includes a buoy shed, coal shed, smokehouse, and the remains of the wharf. (Separate Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties forms have been completed for the buoy shed, coal shed, and smokehouse).

Description of Point Lookout Lighthouse

The Point Lookout Lighthouse, built in 1830, is a combined dwelling and signal light. It is a two-story, four-bay, triple-pile duplex, with a raised basement and full-width front and rear porches. The brick-and-frame walls are covered with stucco. The two-stage octagonal tower projects through the hip roof on the front (east) of the building. Each duplex apartment has an entrance to the drum (or base of the tower), which contains a stair and ladder that lead to the wrought-iron lantern.

The lighthouse reflects substantial alterations made by the Lighthouse Service in 1883, and again between 1927 and 1928. It was originally built as a one-and-one-half-story building

with a light tower to raise the focal plane of the light to twenty-four feet above the ground. In 1883, the roof was raised to two full stories, elevating the focal plane to forty-one feet. The lighthouse then resembled an I-house: two story, five bay, single pile, with a full-width front porch, raised basement, and gable-end chimneys. One- and two-story additions were located at the rear. Only the two-stage tower distinguishes the building as a lighthouse.

Between 1927 and 1928, the Lighthouse Service converted the single-dwelling lighthouse to a duplex. The Service more than doubled the depth of the building, reorganized interior spaces, built two staircases in place of the existing one, altered exterior fenestration to allow private entrances for each duplex apartment, raised the heights of the floors, replaced the side-gable roof with a large hip roof, and covered the original brick structure and the new frame addition with cement plaster stucco. In addition, the rear wing was demolished and the two gable-end chimneys were removed.

The complete and thorough rehabilitation of the lighthouse by the Lighthouse Service between 1927 and 1928 left little of the 1830 and 1883 structures intact. Surviving elements include: the exterior brick walls, encased in stucco and wall board and with altered window and door openings; brick foundation piers for the gable-end chimneys along the exterior basement walls; the front porch; and the tower. The hip roof rises higher around the drum than did the earlier roof, so the sash window on the east side of the drum was replaced with a smaller casement window.

As a result of the extensive changes, the current appearance of the lighthouse is a two-story, four-bay, triple-pile duplex that measures 34 x 45 feet. The symmetry of the two apartments is reflected in the exterior fenestration: the east and west facades are nearly identical to each other, as are the north and south facades. Each has a bulkhead entrance to the raised

basement on the north and south sides. On the east and west sides, each two-bay unit features a window and door, a partitioned porch, and a common stair. The full-width, shed-roofed porches feature standing seam roofs and wood decking and are supported by turned posts and masonry piers, which have concrete block infill on the east and west sides. Windows are six-over-six, double-hung sash. There are fixed lights in the stair landings and in the two round-headed dormers on the north and south sides. Exterior doors are glass and wood-panel doors. The hip roof features an open cornice and is sheathed in asphalt shingles. An interior chimney projects through the center of the west side.

The two-stage, wrought-iron tower consists of an octagonal drum capped by a smaller cylindrical lantern. The drum, which is illuminated by a four-light casement window on the east side, contains a winder stair and ladder that lead to the lantern. The lantern features a 300-degree glass arc, the landward (northern) sixty degrees are opaque. An iron railing and balcony surround the lantern.

The interior plans of the two duplex apartments are largely symmetrical, with common walls dividing the building along the east-west axis. The first floors of each duplex consist of a living room, dining room, and kitchen. Cabinets and stoves remain in both duplexes, although neither is occupied. The second floors each contain three bedrooms, a bathroom, and the octagonal tower drum, which is entered from the south duplex, although both apartments are connected at the base of the tower. The basement has been enlarged and partitioned by a load-bearing wall that supports the common wall on the first and second floors. Stairs to the basement and second floor are located along the rear wall of the living room, which is the rear wall of the 1883 structure. Interior details, including the window and door trim, baseboards, and stair railings and balusters, reflect the late 1920s period of construction. Holes in the walls in the first and second floors of both apartments expose the brick and wood frame.

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the lighthouse was surrounded by outbuildings that were built to support the operation of the light and small-scale farming carried out by the keeper. These mostly small, frame, gable-roofed buildings included a stable and chicken house. The brick smokehouse is the only extant outbuilding.

The lighthouse is unoccupied and in good condition. It has sustained damage from neglect, but is structurally sound and retains most of the alterations made by the Lighthouse Service between 1927-1928. The lighthouse is part of a complex owned by the U. S. Navy and administered by the Patuxent River Naval Air Station. The banks of the complex, which occupies the tip of Southern Maryland, are stabilized with rip rap. Large rocks are used to line the drainage ditches that traverse the area. The complex is secured by a series of fences and is accessible only by appointment.

Statement of Significance Summary: Point Lookout Lighthouse, part of Point Lookout Light Station, is one of twenty-five remaining lighthouses on Chesapeake Bay. Built in 1830 by John Donohoo, the integral dwelling house and tower provided a beacon for travelers of the middle Chesapeake Bay until the light was deactivated in 1965. Alterations to the building in 1883 and in 1927-1928 reflect the changing needs of the U. S. Lighthouse Service and have their own inherent significance. The lighthouse is eligible for listing in the Maryland Register of Historic Properties and the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A because of its association with maritime history in Maryland.

Land Acquisition for the Point Lookout Lighthouse

In 1825, Congress authorized \$1,800 for the construction of a lighthouse on Point Lookout, Maryland, to protect shipping on the Chesapeake Bay and Potomac River. William Maury, Superintendent of Lighthouses in Maryland, selected five-and-one-half acres at the tip of Point Lookout as the most suitable site for the new lighthouse. In December 1825, Maury described the site in a letter to Stephen Pleasanton, fifth auditor of the Treasury and director of the Lighthouse Service from 1820 to 1852:

where the lighthouse should be placed is but a bleak, barren sand beach for many acres; and I concluded it best to locate the site for the lighthouse and dwelling immediately at

¹Ralph Eshelman, "Point Lookout Light Station: Condition Assessment Report" (Historic background, Williamsport Preservation Training Center, Williamsport, Maryland, 1995), 91.

the Point, and to lay off for the use of the keeper, about four acres of tillable, tho very poor, land at some hundred yard distance including in all 5½ acres.²

Mr. Jenifer Taylor, the property owner, refused to sell the land at a price that the Lighthouse Service considered to be reasonable. On February 14, 1826, the Maryland Assembly passed a special Act that authorized the appointment of a special commission to determine the value of the property, attempt to purchase the property, and proceed with condemnation of the parcel, if necessary. Maury offered Taylor \$25 an acre for approximately three acres, then \$50 an acre, but Taylor refused to sell the property. Although Taylor claimed he had just purchased the farm "at a very high price," the former land owners reported to Maury that the price did not exceed \$25 an acre. Taylor, it was later determined, received a "deed of bargain and sale" on January 18, 1826, for 250 acres on Point Lookout for \$2,589.93, approximately \$10 an acre. The appointed commissioners arrived at \$500 for the value of the entire Point Lookout site, nearly \$180 an acre.³

Taylor appealed the commission's valuation, stating that he believed the approximately three-acre property was worth more than \$500. In September 1826, the commissioners, the St. Mary's County Sheriff, Taylor and his attorney, and twelve jurors met at Point Lookout to determine the value of the proposed lighthouse site. The jury assigned a value to the property of \$1,100, nearly \$363 an acre. Maury, distraught at the decision of the jury, wrote to Pleasanton that the site was but a "bleak sand point without the least particle of vegetation and utterly useless for any purpose," and that the garden plot is "at best hardly tillable." He

²Gerald J. Sword, "Acquisition of the Point Lookout Lighthouse Site by the United States Government from Jenifer Taylor" (Scotland, Maryland, 1976), 1.

³Ibid., 2-3, 5.

continued that "to take it all in all I do not believe such a decision was ever before made by men acting under the sacred obligation of an oath."4

In May 1828, Congress appropriated \$4,500 for the Point Lookout Lighthouse project because only \$700 of the 1825 appropriation remained and because the cost of land acquisition was higher than expected. Pleasanton then authorized Maury to pay Taylor \$1,100 upon receipt of a valid deed. Taylor continued to object, citing improper government documents, an unacceptable right of way for a road, and unacceptable landing privileges. Taylor, however, proposed that if he were appointed light keeper at Point Lookout, he "would agree to take five hundred dollars for the land and privileges of a road along the beach." Pleasanton flatly refused Taylor's offer. ⁵

In September 1829, without clear title to the property, Pleasanton ordered Dabney S. Carr, a successor to Maury, to erect a fence around the Point Lookout Lighthouse site and to advertise for the construction of the facilities. Negotiations with Taylor continued even as the lighthouse was constructed. Explaining to Congress the long delay in acquiring Point Lookout, Pleasanton outlined the years of negotiations and Taylor's failure to produce a valid deed. Taylor had still not produced a valid deed two years later when Congress again inquired as to why he had not been paid for the lighthouse site. On July, 1832, a commission of partition, established by the St. Mary's County Court to settle the land dispute, established that Taylor had a valid

⁴Ibid., 3.

⁵Eshelman, "Point Lookout Light Station," 91-92; Sword, "Acquisition of the Point Lookout Lighthouse Site," 3-4.

deed to Point Lookout.⁶ The Lighthouse Service then paid Taylor \$1,150 and received title to the property on December 13, 1832.⁷

The Lighthouse Service purchased one acre and forty-six square perches⁸ "at the junction of the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay" as the location for the lighthouse, and a second two-acre plot north of the point for the light keeper's garden. Earlier correspondence between Maury and Pleasanton suggests that they believed that small-scale farming would be an important part of the light keeper's existence at Point Lookout. In February 1826, Maury described the point in a letter to Pleasanton: "... on the Point which is nothing but sand land as would be sufficient for the lighthouse, dwelling, etc. and three or four acres a short distance off for a garden patch ..." The proposed garden patch was purchased from Taylor as a discontiguous parcel north of the lighthouse. The diamond-shaped garden tract is documented in correspondence in the 1870s¹⁰ and depicted in plats from 1915 (based on an 1888 plat) and 1933, which identifies a stable and chicken house and the current smokehouse identified as a "corn house."

⁶Sword, "Acquisition of the Point Lookout Lighthouse Site," 4-5.

⁷Eshelman, "Point Lookout Light Station," 93.

⁸One rod is equivalent to 16.5 linear feet; a perch equals one square rod, or 272.25 square feet.

⁹Sword, "Acquisition of Point Lookout Lighthouse Site," 2.

¹⁰J. M. Moyer to M. C. Miegs, 29 May 1877, Point Lookout General Correspondence File, Record Group 26, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

¹¹"Point Lookout Light Station, Maryland," 21 May 1915 and "Point Lookout Light Station," 28 July 1933, Point Lookout Site File, Record Group 26, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

Farming at Point Lookout was consistent with the practices of light keepers throughout the United States. Keepers engaged in a variety of activities to supplement their keeper's pay, which was notoriously low. The Lighthouse Service permitted outside occupations that did not interfere with a keeper's ability to maintain the light in working order and to be at his post at sunset. Vegetable farming was the most common activity where location and soil conditions were favorable. In New England, where coasts are rocky, keepers engaged in fishing, lobstering and boat building.¹²

Design and Construction of Point Lookout Lighthouse, 1830-1888

The higher than expected costs associated with land acquisition at Point Lookout led the Lighthouse Service to change the design of the lighthouse from a light tower and separate living quarters to a less costly design described as, "dwelling and lighthouse united." Constructed in 1830, the one-and-one-half-story dwelling with a light tower was described in an 1858 report as a yellow brick dwelling with four rooms, an attached kitchen, and red shingle roof from which the tower and lantern protruded. 14

The Point Lookout lighthouse was built by John Donohoo, from Havre de Grace, Maryland. Donohoo (1786-1858) was a commercial fisherman and served as a Havre de Grace Town Commissioner for sixteen years. In addition, Donohoo engaged in land speculation,

¹²F. Ross Holland, America's Lighthouses: An Illustrated History (New York: Dover Publications, 1972), 47-50.

¹³Sword, "Acquisition of Point Lookout Lighthouse Site," 5.

¹⁴Eshelman, "Point Lookout Light Station," 100.

repaired roads and wharfs, and, between 1825 and 1853, built twelve of the first seventeen lighthouses in Maryland. Nothing is known of his early education or training.¹⁵

Seven of the lighthouses built by Donohoo in Maryland were masonry towers with separate living quarters for the keeper: Pooles Island, 1825; Thomas Point, 1825; Concord Point, 1827; Cove Point, 1828; Lazaretto Point, 1831; Turkey Point, 1833; and Piney Point, 1836. Piney Point is located on the Potomac River approximately ten miles northwest of Point Lookout. It was recently rehabilitated. The remaining five Maryland lighthouses that Donohoo built combined the light tower and keeper's quarters: Fog Point, 1827; Point Lookout, 1830; Clay Island, 1832; Blakistone Island, 1851; and Fishing Battery, 1853. The Blakistone Island integral lighthouse that John Donohoo built in St. Mary's County, Maryland, consisted of a two-story, five-bay dwelling with gable-end chimneys surmounted by a two-stage light tower. Before it was destroyed by fire in 1956, the Blakistone light closely resembled the light at Point Lookout after the Point Lookout Lighthouse was raised to two stories in 1883. 17

The integral keeper's dwelling and light tower is an early form of lighthouse design employed on the Chesapeake Bay and throughout the United States. Although integral dwelling and light towers could not reach the greater focal-plane heights that towers could achieve, the Lighthouse Service continued to construct lower-order integral lights on rivers, bays, and other protected waterways. Point Lookout had a focal plane of twenty-four feet above the ground.

¹⁵F. Ross Holland, Maryland Lighthouses of the Chesapeake Bay An Illustrated History (Crownsville, Maryland: Maryland Historical Trust Press, 1996).

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷Robert De Gast, *The Lighthouses of the Chesapeake* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 159.

The light was powered by an oil lamp that produced a fixed white light visible for ten nautical miles. In 1857, the light apparatus was replaced by a more powereful fourth-order Fresenel lens.¹⁸

The design of the lantern at Point Lookout, noted for its diagonal window muntins, is nearly identical to the lantern that Donohoo built at Cove Point Lighthouse in 1828. The Lighthouse Service became concerned with construction of the lantern at Point Lookout when it was believed that it was built of cast iron and not wrought iron as specified in the contract. After inspecting the lighthouse in 1830, Lighthouse Inspector James Collins wrote to Dabney Carr, Superintendent of Maryland Lighthouses.

It is cast iron, not wrought iron and will break rather than bend and cannot be repaired as easily. . . also the heavy dimensions of the posts, perpendiculars, and horizontal bars forming squares for the reception of the glass—the light being reflected inside the tower. It is reasonable to assume that the least obstruction to the rays shining through the lantern, the greater the advantage to the mariner navigating the Chesapeake Bay. 19

Donohoo assuaged the concerns of the Lighthouse Service about the design of the lantern and demonstrated that only the storm window sash was constructed of cast iron. Donohoo

¹⁸Lighthouse Board, List of Light-Houses, Lighted Beacons, and Floating Lights of the United States (Washington, D. C.: William A. Harris, 1859), 212-213.

¹⁹James W. Collins to Dabney S. Carr, 23 July 1830, Point Lookout General Correspondence File, Record Group 26, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

completed work on the lighthouse by October 1, 1832, and received payment of \$3,500.20 The Point Lookout light was first lit on September 20, 1830.21

A buoy depot was established at Point Lookout in 1883. The lighthouse keeper at Point Lookout was responsible for supervising the operations of the buoy depot in addition to maintaining the light in good working order. To compensate for these added responsibilities, the annual salary of the keeper at Point Lookout was increased from \$520 (the typical salary of a Chesapeake Bay light keeper) to \$800. ²²

In 1883, the Lighthouse Service raised the one-and-one-half-story lighthouse to two full stories and added new front and rear porches, "for the better accommodation of the keepers" and additional personnel assigned to Point Lookout.²³ This raised the height of the focal plane to forty-one feet. The renovated lighthouse featured a five-bay, symmetrical facade, center-hall plan, and gable-end chimneys.

The Lighthouse Service built outbuildings at Point Lookout throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to support the operation of the light station. These were mostly small,

²⁰Eshelman, "Point Lookout Light Station," 93.

²¹Gerald J. Sword, "Point Lookout Lighthouse" (Calvert Marine Museum, Solomons, Maryland, 1980), 5.

²²Between 1905 and 1907, William Yeatman and his successors, Percy S. Yeatman and William Moody, were paid \$800, while Thomas S. Costan, keeper of Piney Point Lighthouse was paid \$560 during this period. "Register of Lighthouse Keepers, 1845-1912," Record Group 26, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

²³Bowerman to Booth, 13 August 1928, RG 26; Eshelman, "Point Lookout Light Station," 95.

frame structures that no longer survive. In 1888, a new summer kitchen was added to the complex and in 1895, a 1,000-gallon iron oil house was built. Other outbuildings supported the keeper's agricultural interests, including a chicken house and stable. The smokehouse, also identified as a corn house, is the only surviving outbuilding at Point Lookout, and may date from the late nineteenth century.

Fog signals, which provided audible warnings to mariners when the lights were not visible in inclement weather, were important components of light stations. The first fog signal at Point Lookout was a bell housed in a wood tower just south of the lighthouse. This tower was replaced in 1872 by a taller wood bell tower. The sound of the fog bell was blocked when the buoy shed was built in 1883 and the coal shed was added in 1884. A new, three-story tower was built in 1888 on the east end of the coal shed. The tower contained a 1,200-pound bell that was cast in West Troy, New York in 1857.²⁴

Light Keepers at Point Lookout

James Davis was the first lighthouse keeper assigned to Point Lookout. Davis died only three months after he was appointed Point Lookout's first keeper. His widow, Ann Davis, tended the light from 1830 until 1848 and assumed his annual salary of \$350. A succession of five male keepers followed, but they totalled only five years of service. Martha A. Edwards, widow of an earlier keeper, tended the light from 1853 to 1855. Martha's daughter, Pamelia Edwards, then served as keeper until she was removed from her post in 1869 (it is unclear why

²⁴The fog signal tower was moved in 1968 to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, St. Michaels, Maryland. "Bell Tower Museum," *The Sun* (Baltimore), July 7, 1968.

she was removed). The three female light keepers tended the lights at Point Lookout for all but six of its first forty years; by 1900, the three women had tended the light for half of its seventy-year existence. Elsewhere in Maryland, women served as keepers of the lights at Blakistone Island, Cove Point, Fishing Battery Island, Fort Carroll, Havre de Grace, Hawkins Point, North Point, Piney Point, Sandy Point, and Turkey Point.²⁵ During the twentieth century, only men are recorded as keepers at Point Lookout.

Women tended lights throughout the history of the Lighthouse Service. The first recorded female keeper, Hannah Thomas, held her husband's post at Gurnet Point, Massachusetts Colony, after he left to fight the British in 1776. More women light keepers were appointed during the nineteenth century; they often assumed their husbands' posts if the men became ill or died. Stephen Pleasanton, the fifth auditor of the Treasury and director of the Lighthouse Service from 1820 to 1852, believed that widows and daughters of keepers were "particularly worthy candidates" for lighthouse keeper's posts. 26 Throughout the Lighthouse Service between 1828 and 1905, 122 women were appointed official keepers and about 150 were appointed assistant keepers, aiding their fathers or husbands. 27

²⁵Mary Louise Clifford and J. Candace Clifford, Women Who Kept the Lights (Williamsburg, Virginia: Cypress Communications, 1993), 160-162.

²⁶Holland, America's Lighthouses, 48.

²⁷Clifford and Clifford, Women Who Kept the Lights, 1-2,111.

The following is a complete list of keepers who served at Point Lookout Light Station and the tenure of their employment:

James Davis	9/ /1830 - 12/ 7 /1830
Ann Davis	12/ 7 /1830 - 1848
William Wood	c. 1849 - 5/ 22 /1849
William P. Baxter	5/ 22 /1849 - 4/ 20 /1853
Richard D. Edwards	4/ 20 /1853 - 7/ 16 /1853
Samuel Cullison	7/ 16/1853 - 7/ 19 /1853
Martha A. Edwards	7/ 19/1853 - 4/ 7 /1855
Pamelia Edwards	4/ 7 /1855 - 6/ 4 /1869
William Moody	6/ 4 /1869 - 9/ 22 /1871
William Yeatman	9/ 22 /1871 - 6/ 1 /1908
Percy S. Yeatman	6/ 1 /1908 - 7/ 1 /1908
William Moody	7/ 1 /1908 - 5/ 1 /1912
Thomas Jackson	5/ 1 /1912 - 9/ 3 /1917
George Willis	9/ 3 /1917 - 8/ /1939
Westly Fulcher	8/ /1939 -
Herman Metevier	- 10/ 15 /1954
Wallace Sturgis	7/ 4 /1955 - 11/ 30 /1956
George Gatton	11/ 30 /1956 -10/ 30 /1965
Raymond Hartzel ²⁸	10/ 30 /1965 - 1/ 11/ 1966

Resort Development at Point Lookout, 1857-1930s

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Point Lookout became a popular resort for residents of Washington and Baltimore who sought relief from city life. In 1857, William Cost Johnson purchased 400 acres of land at Point Lookout. He developed an area north of the lighthouse as a resort, constructed a hotel, and leased 100 cottages. Subscribers to the resort

²⁸Sword, "Point Lookout Lighthouse," 5-6.

included Roger B. Taney and Cyrus B. McCormick, as well as St. Mary's County residents. Lady of the Lake and other steamers provided passenger and freight service to Baltimore.²⁹

Johnson's enterprise foundered during the Civil War, but the resort industry soon returned to Point Lookout. In 1877, the St. Mary's Land and Improvement Company contacted the Lighthouse Board with a proposal to exchange the keeper's two-acre garden plot for a parcel located further north. The garden interfered with their plans to "locate a hotel as near the southern point as possible." A railroad line was planned to link the hotel to Washington. A plan, probably associated with the St. Mary's Land project, depicts approximately 300, 25 x 120-foot lots arranged along three main north/south roads identified as Chesapeake, Washington, and Potomac streets. The plan features seven numbered east/west roads. The land exchange was not made and work on the hotel and rail line was never undertaken.

A second, more ambitious resort development project was planned after 1884 that offered lots and cottages for sale and advertised "surf bathing, duck shooting, boating, crabbing, fishing, tennis, and other sports." The plan featured three north/south roads--Potomac Avenue, Point Lookout Boulevard, and Chesapeake Drive--and eighteen numbered east/west streets. Forty-two blocks were laid out, containing roughly fifty building lots each. The plan depicts a wharf and steamer, a hotel identified as the Hotel Camalier, and the proposed site of another hotel, the

²⁹Regina Combs Hammett, *History of St. Mary's County*, *Maryland 1634-1990* (Ridge, Maryland, 1977), 122.

³⁰J. M. Moyer to Lighthouse Board, 20 December 1877, Point Lookout General Correspondence File, Record Group 26, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

³¹"Plan of Streets, Avenues and Building Lots at Point Lookout, MD," 1877, Point Lookout Site File, Record Group 26, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

same site that was described by the St. Mary's Land and Improvement Company in 1877. Like the 1877 plan, this project never moved beyond the planning stage.³²

Point Lookout's appeal as a resort destination remained strong from the last decades of the nineteenth century through the 1930s. Although the larger, grandiose resort complexes were never built, the hotel built by William Cost Johnson in 1857 continued to draw residents from Washington and Baltimore. Transportation to the Point Lookout Hotel, as it was called, was often difficult because the roads were rough and a rail link was never established. Although steamer was the most popular mode of travel, the wharf at Point Lookout Light Station remained the only practical landing site through the 1930s. In the 1890s, the steamers Arrowsmith, Excelsior, and Sue requested permission to land at the Point Lookout wharf. The Point Lookout Development Company requested permission to land in 1930 and in 1933; the Point Lookout Hotel requested the use of the wharf for the Baltimore, Crisfield and Accomac Steamboat Company to land "Sunday excursionists" at the Point Lookout wharf. The Lighthouse Service usually refused requests to land at the Point Lookout wharf because they believed such landings interfered with the work of the station. An exception was made in this last case because it was too late for the steamboat company to withdraw the heavily advertised Sunday excursion to the hotel.³³

³²"Lots and Cottages For Sale," n.d., Point Lookout Site File, Record Group 26, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

³³Harry H. Hoke to G. R. Putnam, 24 June 1933, Point Lookout General Correspondence File, Record Group 26, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

The Civil War at Point Lookout, 1862-1864

In 1862, the Federal government established Camp Hoffman at Point Lookout. In that year, the government purchased the hotel and 100 cottages that had been constructed by William Cost Johnson and incorporated them into a large hospital complex at the camp. The two-story hotel served as hospital wards A and B; military personnel occupied the cottages. Hammond Hospital, named for Surgeon General W. A. Hammond, was built to accommodate between 1,300 and 1,500 Union soldiers. The hospital headquarters and main wards comprised a radial-plan complex with fifteen one-story, frame wards organized around the chapel, reading room, and kitchen. A 20,000 gallon water tank was designed to flood the hospital in the event of fire. The hospital, located closer to the lighthouse than any other camp building, included a kitchen and dining room that were built only a few feet from the lighthouse.³⁴

On August 17, 1862, the first patients arrived aboard the steamer State of Maine. As the sick and wounded Federal soldiers were being unloaded, the wharf collapsed without loss of life. A new wharf measuring 280 x 16 feet was constructed. When Camp Hoffman served as a supply depot for the Army of the Potomac after 1862, the wharf was extended another thirty feet.³⁵

³⁴Hammett, History of St. Mary's County, Maryland 1634-1990, 122; Edwin W. Beitzell, Point Lookout Prison Camp for Confederates (Abell, Maryland: E. W. Beitzell, 1983), 22.

³⁵Hammett, History of St. Mary's County, Maryland 1634-1990, 122; Donald G. Shomette, "The Point Lookout Survey: The Examination of Marine Transgressions Against an Historic Civil War Prison Complex," in In Search of Our Maritime Past (Proceedings of the Fifteenth Conference on Underwater Archaeology, Program in Maritime History and Underwater Research, East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina, 1984), 131.

Following the Battle of Gettysburg in July 1863, the Federal government established a prisoner of war camp amid the hospital buildings at Point Lookout. By September, 4,000 Confederate prisoners were sent to Camp Hoffman; by December, it held 9,000 men. At its peak, 30,000 men were imprisoned at the sprawling camp, subjected to primitive drainage and sanitary conditions. During the course of its operation, 3,500 prisoners died at the camp.³⁶

The establishment of Camp Hoffman, and especially the prisoner of war camp, made life at the Point Lookout Light Station increasingly difficult. Pamelia Edwards, the keeper at Point Lookout for the duration of the Civil War, was placed in close proximity to thousands of desperate Confederate prisoners. Some attempted to escape; many suffered from exposure; and smallpox, scurvy, and diarrhea were rampant. The only over-land route from the light station north passed through Camp Hoffman. In addition to the added dangers, the duties of the Point Lookout keeper required increased vigilance because of the higher volume of shipping associated with the camp.

Point Lookout During the Late Nineteenth Century

Following the Civil War, Point Lookout returned to its rural isolation. During the late 1860s, the Southern Maryland Railroad planned a rail line that would join St. Mary's County ports, including Point Lookout, with a rail line to Washington, D. C. Although efforts continued through the 1870s, they never resulted in a line to Point Lookout.

³⁶Shomette, "The Point Lookout Survey," 131.

Life at the light station was monotonous throughout the winter months, but that changed during the summer with the arrival of vacationers at Point Lookout. An 1871 Lighthouse Establishment directive identifies as one of the keeper's responsibilities providing tours of the light station to the general public. Because Point Lookout was located adjacent to a resort area, it is possible that some of these vacationers may have visited the lighthouse.

Agriculture remained the principal occupation in St. Mary's County throughout the period that the light station was active. Records show that William Yeatman, keeper of Point Lookout Light Station from 1871 to 1908, cultivated the two-acre garden plot north of the lighthouse. It is assumed that other keepers tended the garden also. Correspondence during the mid-1870s indicates that only one acre was actually productive, the remainder "being too low and near the waters edge." It is not certain what Yeatman was cultivating, although it is likely that at least part of his garden was devoted to vegetables. A 1933 plat depicts the garden plot with outbuildings identified as a stable, chicken house, and corn house. The last of these buildings is the present smokehouse.³⁸

Point Lookout Light Station, 1910s-Present

During the early twentieth century, the buoy depot established at Point Lookout in 1883 became an increasingly important component of the light station. As activity at the buoy depot increased, it became apparent that assistance was needed to accomplish all of the required work

³⁷J. M. Moyer to M. C. Meigs, 20 December 1877, Point Lookout General Correspondence File, Record Group 26, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

³⁸"Point Lookout Light Station," 28 July 1933.

at Point Lookout. On April 20, 1915, the Lighthouse Inspector requested the appointment of an assistant keeper or laborer at the Point Lookout Light Station:

To keep this depot in a suitable condition of orderliness and efficiency, additional help is necessary. One man is reasonably well occupied with the proper up-keep of the light station and supervision over the work of the depot without having to personally engage in cleaning and painting of a large number of buoys handled at this depot. There is, moreover, a great deal of work at this station which is hardly practicable for a lone man to accomplish, but which should be done by a force at the depot in order to avoid the necessity for delay of tenders cleaning, painting, and handling buoys and other heavy supplies.³⁹

The appointment of an assistant keeper was deferred until suitable quarters could be prepared. The position of laborer at Point Lookout Light Station was authorized on December 16, 1926. The laborer, a local resident, was paid \$40 per month to provide assistance to the keeper. Developments that warranted the hiring of a laborer at Point Lookout were noted in a 1926 letter:

The entire point surrounding the light station has been bought by a development concern and all residents removed. This makes Point Lookout Light Station very isolated, the nearest telephone being several miles away, and there being no one resident in the area

³⁹H. D. King to Commissioner of Lighthouses, 20 April 1915, Point Lookout General Correspondence File, Record Group 26, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

who can be called upon for any relief or assistance in case of necessary absence of the keeper.⁴⁰

The position of assistant keeper was authorized at Point Lookout between 1927 and 1930 and the laborer's position was then abolished.

In order to accommodate an assistant keeper, extensive alterations were required on the lighthouse. As early as 1915, it was recognized that the "present dwelling and lighthouse is very old, and will probably need extensive repairs or rebuilding within a few years." By 1927, the lighthouse was described thus, "very old, poorly designed, and practically all flooring and plastering require renewal." 42

Between 1927 and 1928, the Lighthouse Service made extensive alterations to the lighthouse at Point Lookout Light Station. The single-family lighthouse was converted to a duplex, which more than doubled the depth of the building. The Service reorganized interior spaces and altered exterior fenestration to allow private entrances for each apartment. The side-gable roof was replaced with a large hip roof and the rear wing was demolished. Most of the major work, including the keeper's quarters, was completed in 1927. The incomplete half of the dwelling, designated quarters for the assistant keeper, was finished in 1928.

⁴⁰H. D. King to Commissioner of Lighthouses, 29 November 1926, Point Lookout General Correspondence File, Record Group 26, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁴¹H. D. King to Commissioner of Lighthouses, 22 April 1915, Point Lookout General Correspondence File, Record Group 26, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁴²H. D. King to Commissioner of Lighthouses, May 7, 1927, Point Lookout General Correspondence File, Record Group 26, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

In 1928, the source of illumination for the light was described as an oil wick lamp that produced a fixed white light with the intensity of 490 candles.⁴³ The light was visible for twelve miles, flashing twice every twenty seconds. Between 1928 and 1933, electricity was introduced to Point Lookout Light Station. This increased the 490-candle-power light to a proposed 3,300 candle power. The strength of the beam was eventually doubled to 6,400 candle power.⁴⁴ Electricity was also provided for the dwelling and fog signal. It is most likely that electricity was generated from one or more small motors located at the light station because power lines had not extended south to the lighthouse by 1933.

In 1939, the administration of Point Lookout Light Station was transferred to the U. S. Coast Guard. The light, which had not been automated, was deactivated in 1965 and the lens was removed. It was replaced the following year by a skeletal tower located 4-mile off Point Lookout. The light station was transferred to the United States Navy in 1967.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the lighthouse, which is currently unoccupied, served as quarters for the Point Lookout State Park Superintendent. The state park was established in 1965 and comprises between 1,200 and 1,400 acres north of the light station. The light station is currently administered by the Patuxent River Naval Air Station and access to the property is restricted.

⁴³H. B. Bowerman to Edward Booth, 13 August 1928, Point Lookout General Correspondence File, Record Group 26, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁴⁴U. S. Department of Commerce, Light List: Eastport, Maine to and including Chesapeake Bay (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1937), 402-403; Eshelman, "Point Lookout Light Station," 99.

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLANNING DATA

The Point Lookout Lighthouse is evaluated at the state level of significance. Based on the statewide historic contexts delineated in the Maryland Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan, the geographic organization; chronological and developmental periods; associated historical theme; resource type; and design source are outlined below:

1. Geographical organization:

Western Shore

2. Chronological/development periods:

Agricultural-Industrial Transition (A. D. 1815-1870) Industrial/Urban Dominance (A. D. 1870-1930) Modern Period (1930-Present)

3. Historic-period theme:

Maritime History

4. Resource type:

Category: Building

Historic environment: Rural

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): Lighthouse/dwelling

5. Known Design Source: John Donohoo, builder

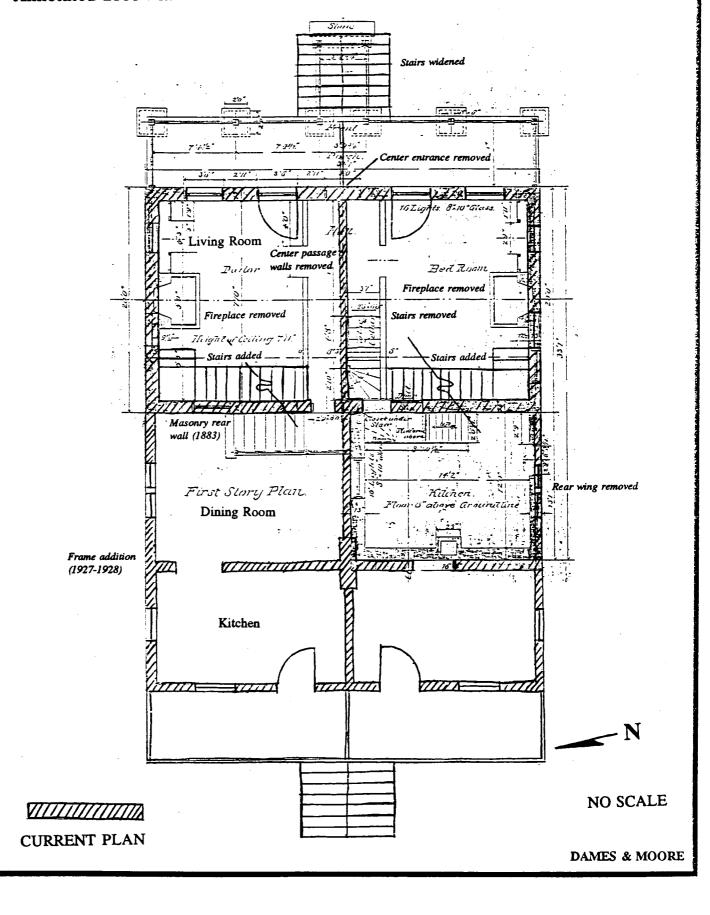
SM-271, Point Lookout Lighthouse Point Lookout Light Station St. Mary's County, Maryland Section 9 (Major Bibliographical References)

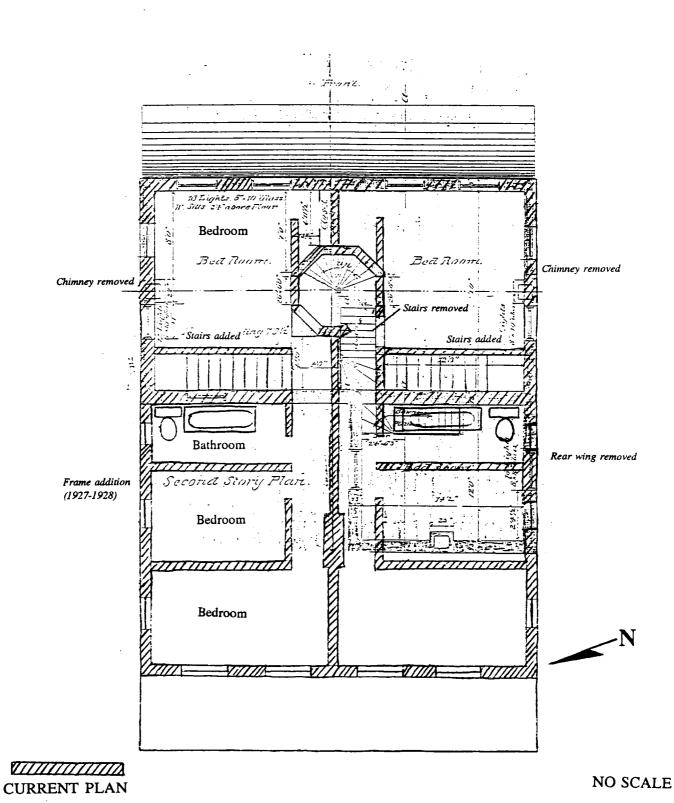
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SM-271, Point Lookout Lighthouse Point Lookout Light Station St. Mary's County, Maryland Section 9 (Major Bibliographical References)

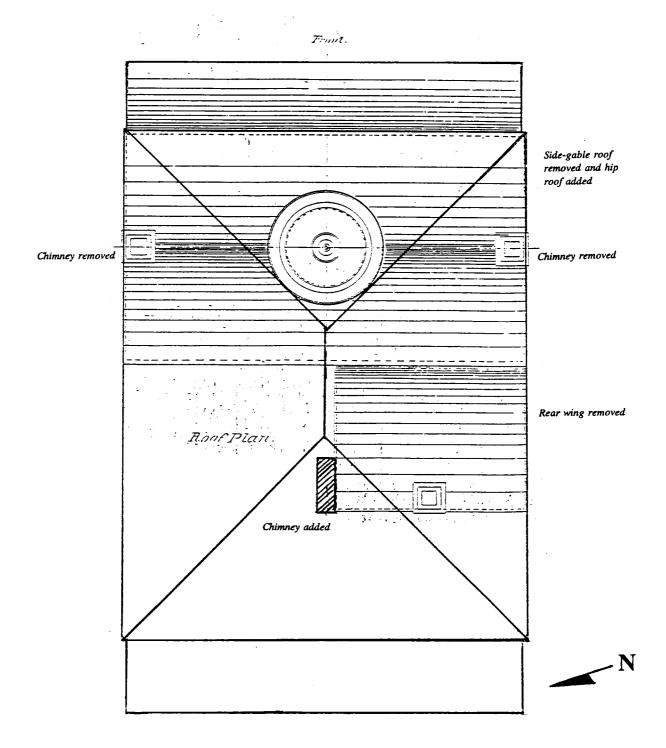
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- Shomette, Donald G. "The Point Lookout Survey: The Examination of Marine Transgressions Against an Historic Civil War Prison Complex." In *In Search of Our Maritime Past*. Proceedings of the Fifteenth Conference on Underwater Archaeology, Program in Maritime History and Underwater Research, East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina, 1984.
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First Floor Plan, Point Lookout Lighthouse Point Lookout, Maryland Annotated 1888 Plan



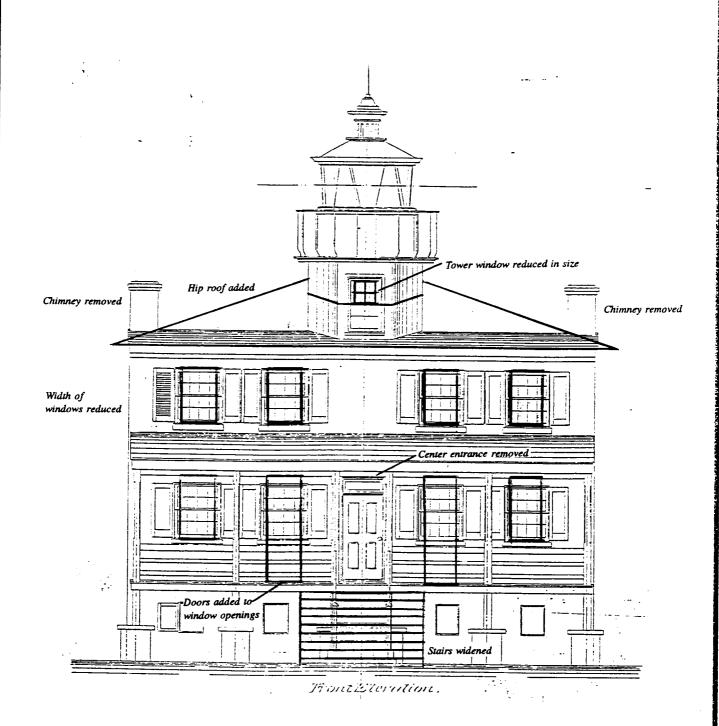


Second Floor Plan, Point Lookout Lighthouse Point Lookout, Maryland, Annotated 1888 Plan



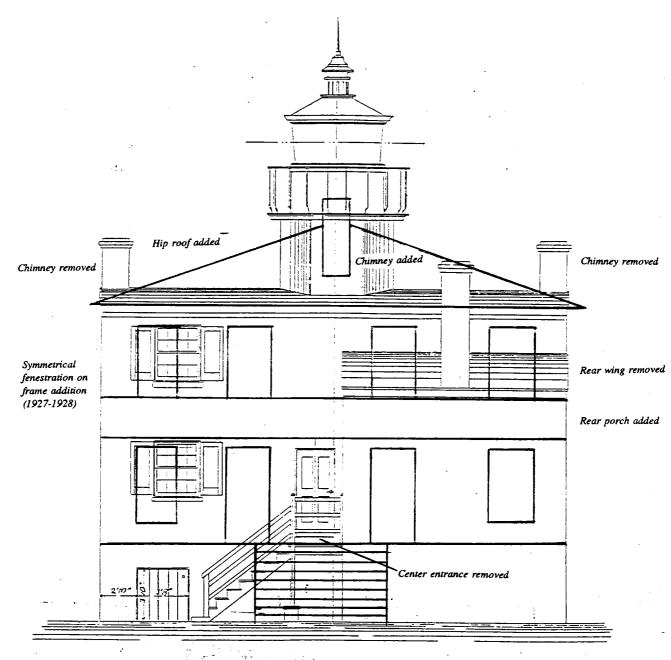
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Roof Plan, Point Lookout Lighthouse Point Lookout, Maryland, Annotated 1888 Plan



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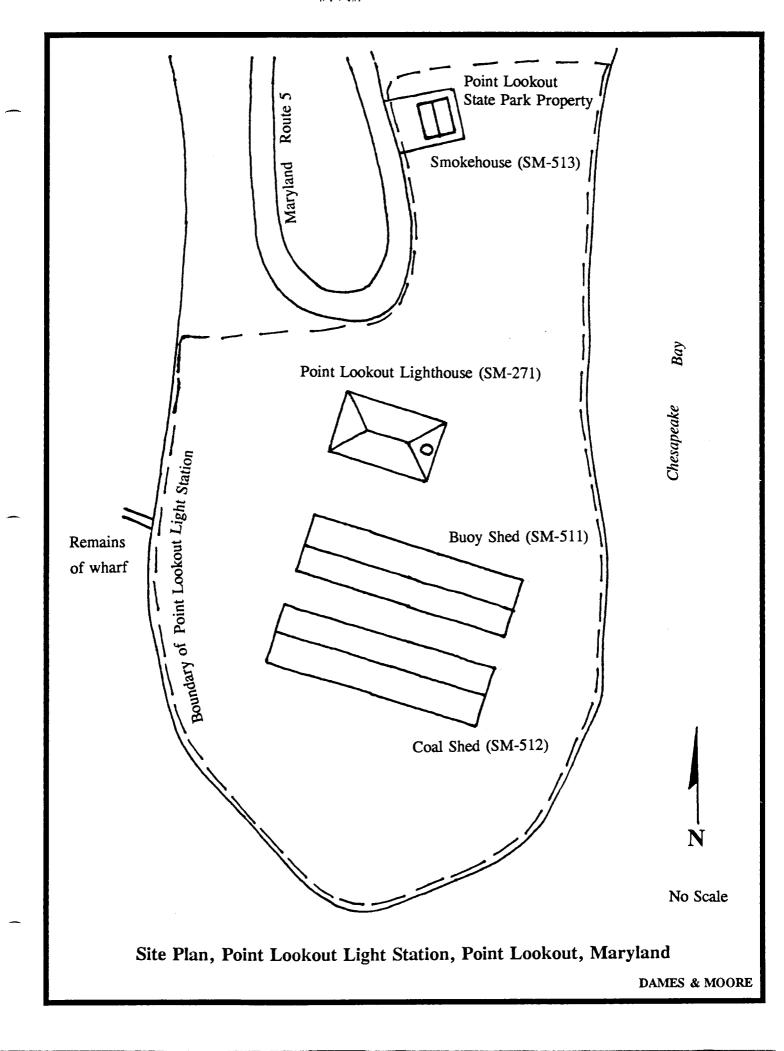
Front Elevation, Point Lookout Lighthouse Point Lookout, Maryland, Annotated 1888 Plan

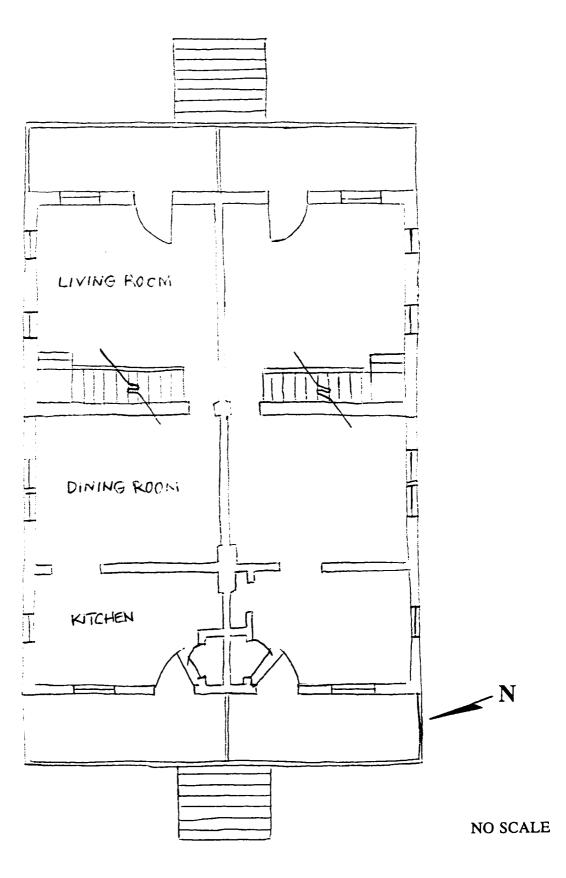


Rear Elevition.

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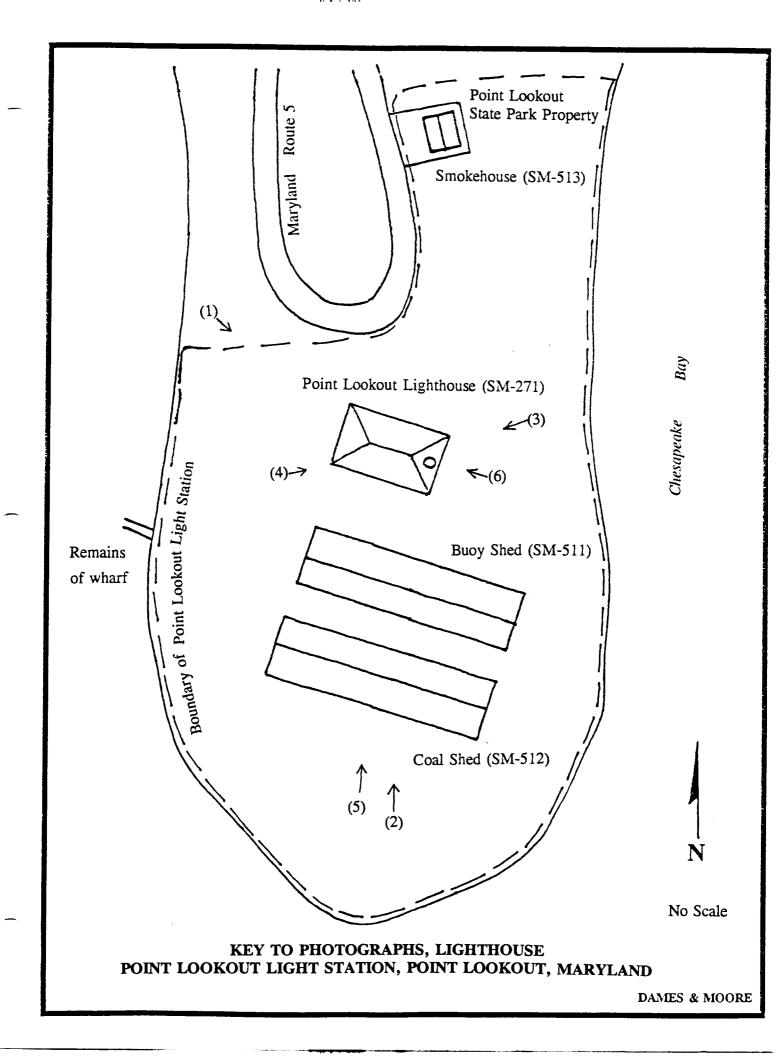
Rear Elevation, Point Lookout Lighthouse Point Lookout, Maryland, Annotated 1888 Plan

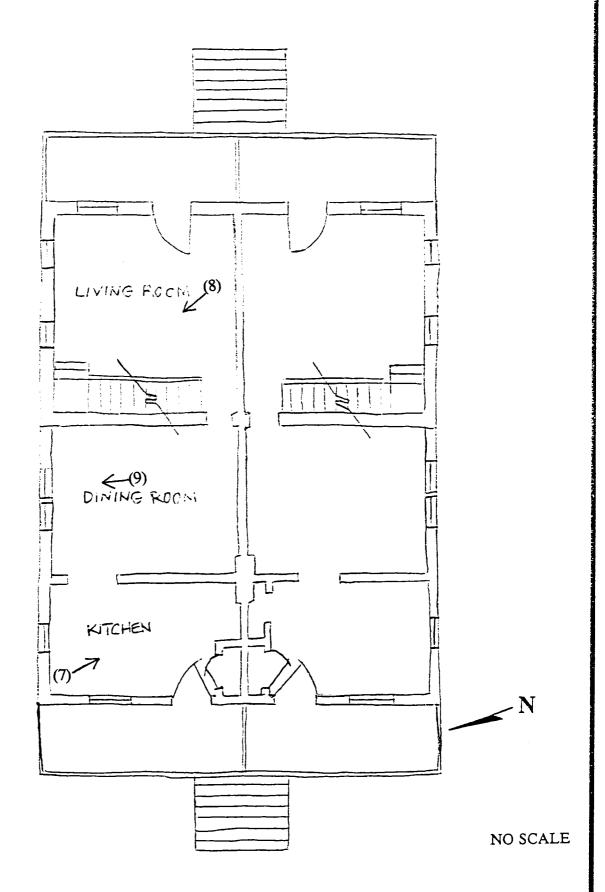




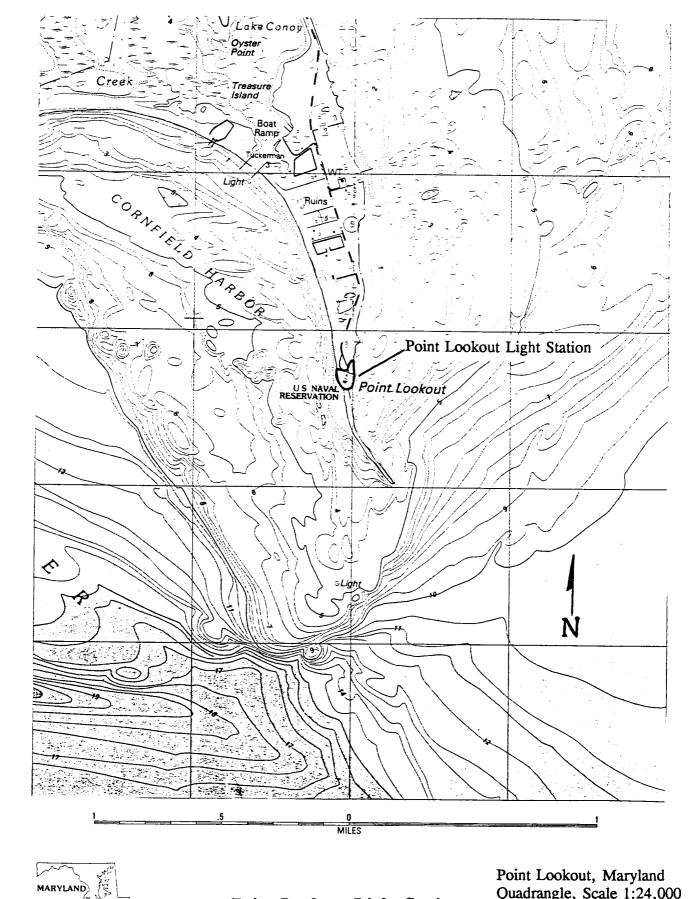
Sketch Plan, First Floor, Point Lookout Lighthouse Point Lookout, Maryland

DAMES & MOORE





KEY TO PHOTOGRAPHS, LIGHTHOUSE POINT LOOKOUT LIGHT STATION, POINT LOOKOUT, MARYLAND



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

Point Lookout Light Station Point Lookout, Maryland

Quadrangle, Scale 1:24,000

DAMES & MOORE

1830 (altered)

Point Lookout Lighthouse was built in 1830 by John Donohoo. The first keeper here was Ann Davis, appointed on December 7, 1830.

The lighthouse consists of a house, from the front now very similar to the keeper's quarters at Piney Point, with a light fower on the roof. Apparently it began as a one-story structure which was raised to two stories in 1883. In 1889 a new fog bell tower was constructed near the lighthouse and a new summer kitchen and stable were built. In 1895 a 1,000-gallon oil house of iron was erected;

basement partially aboveground. There is a porch across the front (east) facade: The light cupola is round with a walkway with iron railings. It sits on an octagonal base on the roof.

The lighthouse is now the residence of the superintendent of Point Lookout State Park.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

SM-271

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

NAME				
HISTORIC				
POINT LO	OKOUT LIGHTHOUSE			
AND/OR COMMON				
LOCATION				
STREET & NUMBER				
	vn Point Lookout Road	(MD 5)		
CITY, TOWN			CONGRESSIONAL DISTRIC	CT
	okout State Park	VICINITY OF	COUNTY	
STATE Marvland		St. Mary's		
CLASSIFIC	ATION			
CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESE	NT USE
DISTRICT	PUBLIC	OCCUPIED	AGRICULTURE	MUSEUM
BUILDING(S)	PRIVATE	_UNOCCUPIED	COMMERCIAL	PARK
STRUCTURE	BOTH	WORK IN PROGRESS	EDUCATIONAL	PRIVATE RESIDENC
SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	ENTERTAINMENT	RELIGIOUS
OBJECT	IN PROCESS	YES: RESTRICTED	GOVERNMENT	SCIENTIFIC
	BEING CONSIDERED	YES: UNRESTRICTED	INDUSTRIAL	_TRANSPORTATION
		NO	MILITARY	OTHER:
OWNER OF	FPROPERTY			
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7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

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CHECK ONE

__EXCELLENT

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CHECK ONE
__UNALTERED

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_GOOD

__RUINS __UNEXPOSED __ALTERED

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AF	REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CH	IECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW		
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SPECIFIC DATES 1830 (altered) BUILDER/ARCHITECT					

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHE	ET IF NECESSARY
10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY	
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION	
LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES	FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES
STATE	COUNTY
11 FORM PREPARED BY NAME / TITLE	
ORGANIZATION	DATE
STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
CITY OR TOWN	STATE

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

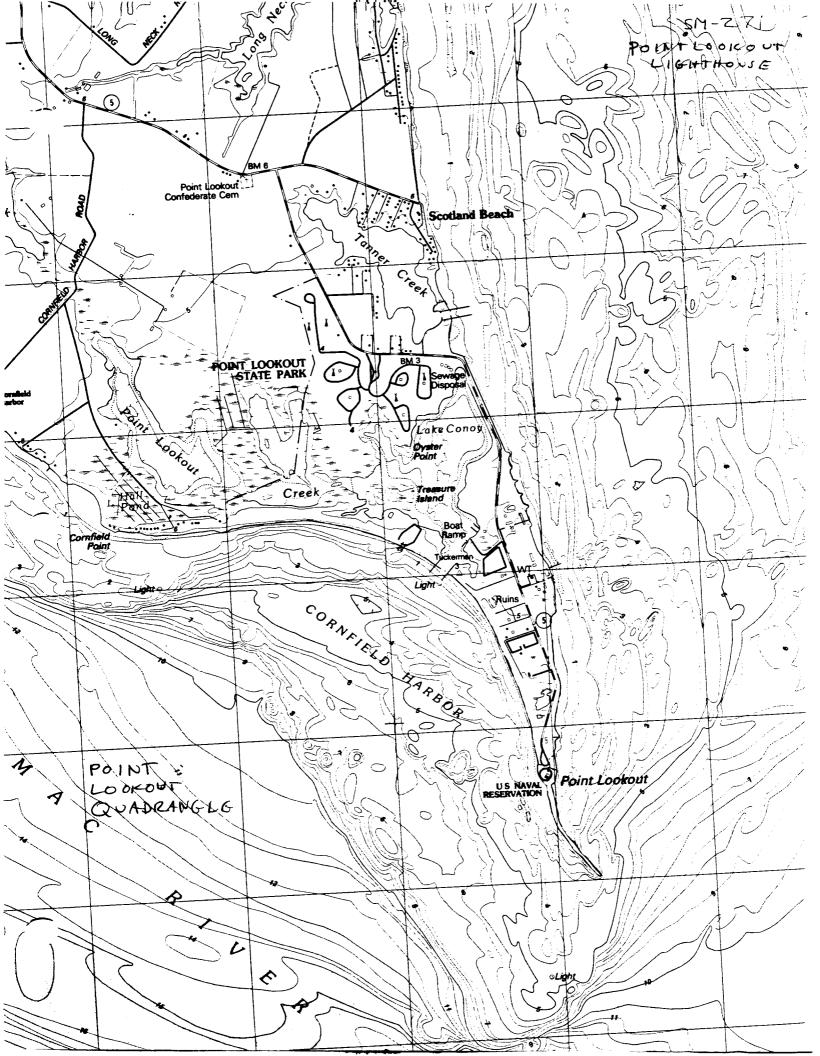
The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust

The Shaw House, 21 State Circle

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

(301) 267-1438





514-271
Point Lookout Lighthouse
5/17
Pamela J. Blumgart



SM-241

Point Lookout Lighthouse

Point Lookout State Park

photo: Julie King

photo date: 1988

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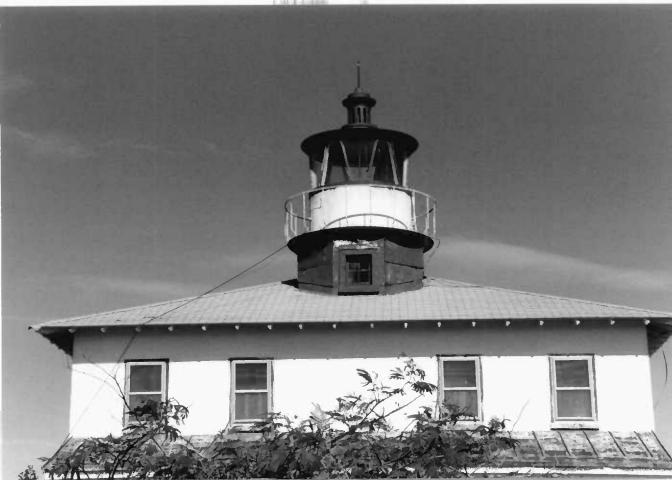


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